

Exhibit M to Ferber Declaration



8/25/89 PHILADAILY 5

NewsRoom

Page 1

8/25/89 Phila. Daily News 5
 1989 WLNR 946138

Philadelphia Daily News (PA)
 Copyright © 2004 Philadelphia Newspapers Inc. All rights reserved.

August 25, 1989

Section: LOCAL

JBM ITS RISE TO POWER BRASH YOUNG MEN RULE OVER DRUG TRADE

Kitty Caparella, Daily News Staff Writer

They were young and on the hustle, street-smart and well-connected, and they knew there was a gaping hole in Philadelphia's drug business.

Their motto was "Get down or lay down" - cooperate or be killed.

Sixteen months ago, the Junior Black Mafia was described by law enforcement authorities as a flash in the pan.

But a Daily News investigation, which included extensive interviews with street sources and law enforcement sources close to an ongoing probe of the JBM, reveals that:

* The JBM has grown from a handful of young men dealing cocaine in Germantown in 1985 to a huge, many-tentacled organization that has cornered the drug trade in Germantown, Mount Airy, North Central Philadelphia, much of West Philadelphia, and parts of South and Southwest Philadelphia.

Today there are as many as 40 ranking leaders, 300 active associates who do their bidding, and from 1,000 to 5,000 smaller players, such as crack cooks, lookouts and couriers.

* The JBM has established at least 45 loosely affiliated cocaine franchises that feed the city's insatiable appetite with an awesome 100 to 150 kilos of high-quality cocaine a week - much of it in the form of crack.

This weekly haul is worth more than \$2.5 million wholesale and several times that at street-level prices. A \$10,000 kilo of cocaine, for example, can be converted into about \$100,000 worth of crack.

* At least 25 people have been murdered and many others maimed in JBM-related incidents in the last two years; 24 of them have died in the last 16 months.

Many of the victims of the JBM's "shoot first, ask questions later" mentality are rival dealers, feuding members of competing JBM factions or associates caught skimming profits.

But others have been innocent victims, including a 45-year-old Montgomery County man gunned down while he dined at a West Oak Lane tavern on Aug. 10, and 6-year-old Ralph Brooks, who was paralyzed in a JBM-related shooting last summer in South Philadelphia.

The JBM has been so adept at intimidating witnesses that survivors of assassination attempts have refused to testify against their assailants, who usually carry high-powered, semi-automatic weapons. Authorities said JBM operatives also have tried to buy even more powerful weapons, including hand grenades.

* Much of the violence of the last 16 months has involved rival JBM factions, JBM dealers trying to become independent dealers, or smaller independent dealers trying to prevent the JBM from encroaching on their turf.

* The JBM has infiltrated or obtained a financial interest in at least 33 businesses.

These include delicatessens, video stores, clothing stores, automobile detailing shops, security firms and car washes throughout the city.

JBM leaders use these businesses to launder money and provide legitimate fronts for their operations, authorities believe.

* The JBM had already been in existence for four years before law enforcement developed an overall strategy against it.

Police Commissioner Willie Williams feels that police did not wait too long, and points to the recent formation of an anti-JBM task force as evidence that law enforcement is aggressively pursuing the organization.

Other cops are not so sanguine.

"It's going to be quite a job to take them down," a police official said. "It's just a shame they've been neglected so long . . . and been able to grow."

In the past 18 months, at least 30 of the top 40 JBM leaders have been arrested, most of them because of the violent factional feuds. Additionally, some \$410,000 of nearly \$1 million in JBM-related assets has been forfeited to the district attorney's office this year.

The task force - local and state police and agents from four federal agencies - is launching an attack on the JBM using the same multi-agency approach that broke the back of the mob run by Nicodemo "Little Nicky" Scarfo.

Their work will be cut out for them.

Of the 30 or so top JBM leaders arrested in the past 18 months, few are behind bars.

Reputed JBM founding member James Cole was arrested shortly after noon on Wednesday in lower Bucks County on federal weapons charges. Three hours later, he walked out of the federal courthouse, free on \$100,000 bail.

It was the expensive European cars being driven by young black men that first caught the attention of police in Germantown in the spring of 1987.

Many of the men, all under 25 years old, wore flashy diamond-encrusted rings with the initials "JBM."

Asked at the time what "JBM" meant, ranking JBM member Leonard Patterson told police: "Just Burn Money."

It did not take police long to figure that the money was from cocaine. It took them a while longer to learn what the initials really stood for - and the shocking truth that the organization already had been on the street for two years.

The Junior Black Mafia came into being at a fortuitous time for the brash young drug dealers who formed the nucleus of the organization in late 1985 and early 1986.

Longtime patterns of drug trafficking in Philadelphia had broken down.

The Scarfo mob was on the ropes. La Cosa Nostra had controlled drug trafficking in the black community for decades, demanding a street tax from black dealers in return for a steady supply of methamphetamine ("speed"), heroin and cocaine.

With most of Scarfo's top associates behind bars or headed there, the street tax was off and black dealers were able to free-lance without interference for the first time.

The Black Mafia, founded in 1970 by a group of young black Muslims, was in ruins. Its decade-long reign of terror had ended with most of the organization's ranking members dead or in prison.

And such longtime independent kingpins as Roland "Pops" Bartlett, who controlled heroin and cocaine sales in northwest Philadelphia and parts of North Philadelphia, and Lonnie Dawson, a reputed Black Mafia hit man, were behind bars.

Young black dealers turned for advice to other dealers more experienced in the drug trade. At least three imprisoned traffickers, including Robert "Nudie" Mims, a former Black Mafia member convicted of murder, were consulted.

Police cite a meeting in Los Angeles in late 1985 or early 1986 and several subsequent meetings in Philadelphia as the points where the JBM began to take shape.

Attending the Los Angeles meeting were James Cole and his brother, Hayward Cole, and Mark Casey, Tracy Mason and Aaron Jones, law enforcement and street sources said. They were joined by at least five other young men in the later Philadelphia meetings.

The five young men were friends. They lived in the same neighborhoods, attended the same schools, and had close family ties.

The Cole brothers, both convicted drug traffickers, had been Black Mafia enforcers in the 1970s, law enforcement sources said. Jones was attending Temple University, while Mason was a dealer at Atlantic City casinos. Casey already had been convicted of voluntary manslaughter.

The Cole brothers and another founding member, Rick Jones, set up the deals to bring drugs, predominantly cocaine, into Philadelphia, according to police and street sources.

Hayward Cole had developed drug contacts in Los Angeles, South Florida and Atlanta after he had been run out of town following a dispute with Craig Murphy, a violence-prone man who operated a small West Philadelphia drug organization called ''The Family,'' street sources said.

The other founding members were to distribute drugs, collect and launder money and coordinate activities in different sections of the city.

The founders divided Philadelphia into sections - street sources said there are six sections, while law -enforcement sources said there are nine - and set out to contact every free-lance drug organization in each section to bring them into the JBM fold.

For a \$1,000 initiation fee, JBM franchisees would be entitled to deal exclusively in their neighborhoods as long as they paid a weekly cut of their drug profits to the JBM hierarchy. Cuts typically ranged from \$500 to \$1,000 per dealer.

In return, they would be provided cocaine on a regular basis and the services of several lawyers on retainer whenever they got into trouble.

Back in 1986, the JBM leaders figured they would not stay in the drug business very long, street sources said. They would earn quick money, invest in legitimate businesses, and leave the highly volatile drug trade to others.

But greed took over.

Fancy cars, furs, jewelry, new homes and sometimes legitimate businesses made for a comfortable life - providing, of course, the drug money continued to flow.

Demand began outstripping supply, so the JBM bosses began turning to additional sources: major wholesalers already doing business in Hispanic neighborhoods east of Broad Street, and Colombian traffickers who shipped huge quantities of cocaine to

Philadelphia on consignment.

By this year, the number of JBM franchises had grown to 45, law enforcement sources said, and the JBM had begun cooperating with remnants of the Scarfo mob and the largely defunct Black Mafia in the distribution of cocaine.

Law enforcement sources said the present-day hierarchy is fluid, with key players moving in nine different sections of the city.

Street sources said the organization is structured so that a supervisor and a second-in-command from six different sections of the city sit on a "commission" similar to Mafia and Black Mafia tribunals, but police discount the existence of a JBM commission.

If a dealer is arrested, bail is posted immediately, and one of several lawyers on retainer is contacted, law enforcement and street sources said.

Initially, lawyers were to be called in for all crimes except murder. The group was so intent on keeping a quiet, non-violent profile that dealers were told they would be on their own if they became involved in murder.

This generally low-key approach to empire building lasted for nearly two years.

Then, about 16 months ago, violent disputes erupted among JBM factions. One faction issued a nine-name hit list, and some members began wearing bulletproof vests.

Many of the shootings - at least 25 murders since April 1988 - were over drug debts, some as small as \$600.

Dealers suspected of skimming profits, such as JBM lieutenant Reginald Rittenberg, were killed, street sources said. Rittenberg, 29, was said to be pocketing \$1,500 from every kilo of cocaine he was moving in his Mount Airy neighborhood.

JBM dealers who wanted to become independent, such as Albert Ragan, who broke away to avoid the street tax, were gunned down.

These murders soon begat retaliation murders, and the restriction under which lawyers would not be hired to represent JBM members in homicides was dropped.

After Ragan was killed in West Philadelphia on March 26, two more West Philadelphia dealers were killed in retaliation: Dennis Caldwell went down on April 1 and Brock White on April 9.

There were hits and attempted hits all over the city, some in broad daylight, and one in the City Hall courtyard.

"If you mess up the money or mess with the product, they kill you," explained a law enforcement source. "There's no bond."

With ranking JBM members preoccupied with warring, many lower-level dealers stopped paying the street tax.

"This is like Al Capone stuff. Somebody has been watching 'The Godfather' too much," complained one street source.

"These younger guys are crazy, walking into a courtroom with guns," said the source. "Back when we used to go to court we'd never shoot in City Hall."

It was Sgt. Steve Arch and other 14th Police District officers who in the spring of 1987 began noticing the expensive cars driven by young, well-dressed black men.

They all seemed to be headed for A-Tech, an auto detailing shop on Wayne Avenue near Washington Lane in Germantown, owned by Benjamin "Bennie" Goff, that was used as a Junior Black Mafia meeting place. Goff was identified this year by the Pennsylvania Crime Commission as a ranking JBM member.

The JBM already had been in business for two years. By the time a local-federal anti-JBM task force was formed this summer, the JBM had been doing business for nearly four years.

Although 30 ranking JBM members have been arrested in the last 18 months and police said they have solved all but eight of the 25 JBM-related murders, there have been relatively few major successes. Most of the 30 ranking members quickly returned to the streets, and the flow of JBM-financed cocaine has turned into a flood.

Williams has stepped up the attack in the 14 months he has been police commissioner, increasing the number of investigators from a handful to an entire squad.

He initiated a JBM task force, and then this summer invited the state police, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and Internal Revenue Service to join in the battle.

Investigators initially were "falling over each other," according to a law enforcement source, but the task force was reorganized recently and is now gearing up to target specific JBM members in an effort to maximize the arrests and prison terms, whether they are made under federal or state law.

The multi-agency "shotgun" approach was the key to bringing down the Scarfo mob, law enforcement sources said, and the anti-JBM effort is bound to pay off.

The task force plans to go after JBM members on a variety of charges ranging from murder to tax evasion to racketeering.

If circumstances warrant, JBM members can be charged under the tough federal drug kingpin act, which calls for sentences ranging from 10-year, no-parole

sentences to life in prison.

In addition, \$410,000 of nearly \$1 million in seized JBM-related assets has been forfeited to the district attorney's office this year. The assets include cash, houses, cars, furs, jewelry and weapons, but not the assets of any of the 33 businesses identified as being linked to the JBM.

Williams last night said he feared that articles about the JBM would "seriously jeopardize the investigation" and could affect the "safety of the informants and police officers. . . . These guys have intelligence and read the paper, too."

He pointed out that it is difficult to conduct a highly sensitive investigation under the glare of publicity.

"It's going to be a struggle. It's going to be a struggle and take the time and effort of all the agencies."

THE WARLORDS OF CRACK

----- INDEX REFERENCES -----

COMPANY: TEMPLE UNIVERSITY

NEWS SUBJECT: (Violent Crime (1VI27); Crime (1CR87); Judicial (1JU36); Legal (1LE33); Social Issues (1SO05); Criminal Law (1CR79); Police (1PO98))

INDUSTRY: (Casinos (1CA80))

REGION: (Pennsylvania (1PE71); USA (1US73); Americas (1AM92); North America (1NO39); California (1CA98))

Language: EN

OTHER INDEXING: (BLACK MAFIA; BUREAU OF ALCOHOL; DAILY NEWS; DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION; FBI; GODFATHER; INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE; JBM; JUNIOR BLACK MAFIA; MAFIA; PENNSYLVANIA CRIME COMMISSION; REPUTED JBM; SCARFO; TEMPLE UNIVERSITY; TOBACCO) (Aaron Jones; Al Capone; Albert Ragan; Casey; Cole; Craig Murphy; Fancy; Firearms; Goff; Hayward Cole; James Cole; Jones; La Cosa Nostra; Leonard Patterson; Lonnie Dawson; Mark Casey; Mason; Ragan; Ralph Brooks; Reginald Rittenberg; Rick Jones; Rittenberg; Sixteen; Steve Arch; Tracy Mason; Williams; Willie Williams) (MURDER; DRUG; VIOLATION; PHILADELPHIA; ORGANIZED; CRIME; NAMELIST)

EDITION: PM

Word Count: 2912
8/25/89 PHILADAILY 5
END OF DOCUMENT

Exhibit N to Ferber Declaration

BLACK BROTHERS INC

'A gripping story'

Philadelphia Inquirer



Sean Patrick Griffin

**The Violent Rise and Fall of
Philadelphia's Black Mafia**

BLACK BROTHERS, INC.

The Violent Rise and Fall of Philadelphia's Black Mafia

"A gripping story ... Griffin richly documents the Black Mafia's organization, outreach and over-the-top badness." *Philadelphia Inquirer*

"Griffin's reporting on the Black Mafia and its interaction with law enforcement, the Nation of Islam and the Italian mob is fascinating." *Philadelphia Weekly*

"A confident chronicle of Philly's Black Mafia, the decades-long collaboration among drug dealers, Muslim clerics and local politicians." *Philadelphia Magazine*

"A richly detailed narrative of the murderous history of the city's first African-American crime syndicate." *Philadelphia Daily News*

"A great, sprawling epic." Duane Swierczynski, editor-in-chief, *Philadelphia City Paper*

"If you're a crime buff, a history lover, or if you just want something fascinating to read, it's a book you can't refuse." Terri Schlichenmeyer, syndicated reviewer and host of www.BookWormSez.com

"I couldn't put this book down." Keith Murphy, award-winning broadcaster and host of the *Urban Journal* on XM Radio's *The Power*

"Sean Patrick Griffin has given us a really extensive look into the Black Mafia ... and has produced one of best pieces of research on the underworld ... that I have ever seen," Elmer Smith, *The Exchange*, 1340AM WHAT

"The book is incredible ... amazing stuff." Dom Giordano, radio host, 1210AM WPHT

"Sean Patrick Griffin, in surreal detail, lays out the twist and turns, the political and religious associations ... a guaranteed chilling read." The Melting Pot

"Searing, unrelenting and ruthlessly precise." Henry Schipper, producer for Black Entertainment Television's *American Gangster* series.

BLACK BROTHERS, INC.

The Violent Rise and Fall of Philadelphia's Black Mafia

Sean Patrick Griffin

Milo Books Ltd

Sean Patrick Griffin

*Black Brothers Inc: The Violent Rise and Fall of Philadelphia's
Black Mafia*

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 1 903854 36 9

ISBN-13 978 1 903854 36 5

Copyright © 2005 Sean Patrick Griffin

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced, by any process or technique, without the express written consent of the publisher.

First published in 2005 by Milo Books Ltd

Revised and updated edition published in 2007.

Typeset by e-type

Printed in the United States of America

MILO BOOKS LTD

www.milobooks.com

blue jeans and black Reebok sneakers – standard fare for a drug dealer at the time, and a marked departure from the stylish suits and alligator shoes of the era when he and his friends ruled the streets. The days of Superfly – and the Black Mafia – were over. An investigation into his death turned up interesting leads, but, like many other Black Mafia cases, the murder has never been solved. One informant said the hit was ordered from prison by Lonnie Dawson and/or Sam Christian, the latter of whom was rumored to be making a return to the street in the near future. Another source claimed Cadillac Willie Rispers was behind the hit and that it was over the Richard Allen Homes drug territory. In any event, Barnes's death started another war between rival drug factions involving what was left of the 20th and Carpenter Streets gang.

★

Nudie Mims remained in power at Graterford Prison. He was even credited by authorities for having a lead role in the creation of a drug gang calling itself the Junior Black Mafia [JBM]. The JBM started as a handful of cocaine dealers in the city's Germantown section in 1985, and continued to grow, filling the vacuum in the narcotics trade created by the extensive investigations into Philadelphia's crime family in the mid- to late-1980s, and the largely vanquished Black Mafia. Two of the gang's founders, James and Hayward Cole, were enforcers and runners for the Black Mafia in the 1970s. It was said that JBM leader Aaron Jones was obsessed with the popular film *The Godfather* and crafted his persona in the mold of Marlon Brando's character, Vito Corleone.

An OCU intelligence report critiqued the gang in 1988: "The JBM is a group of young black males deeply involved in drug traffic in the Philadelphia area, these members are flashy in their style and flaunt their profits, driving expensive cars mainly Mercedes and BMWs which are completely [customized] with gold trim, black windows, etc. They wear brightly colored jogging suits ... along with expensive jewelry." They were especially known for their trademark, diamond-encrusted rings bearing the initials JBM.

The gang dealt primarily in cocaine, and worked loosely with remaining factions of both the Black Mafia and the Scarfo (*nee* Bruno) crime family. Police conducting surveillance in February 1988 observed a leading JBM figure meeting with an Italian mobster inside "the LCN clubhouse" at 16th Street and Oregon Avenue. Informants claimed that when JBM members arrived at the clubhouse, they were "greeted as long lost friends." Sources also said that younger members of the Scarfo family, and specifically up-and-comer Joey Merlino, were working with the JBM to commandeer various drug territories throughout the city and southern New Jersey. Several JBM members attended the 1988 murder trial of mob

GET DOWN OR LAY DOWN / 229

boss Nicky Scarfo in an apparent, and rather poorly calculated, display of support. Law enforcement agencies photographed numerous JBM characters at the trial to build their intelligence on the hyper drug gang. A cocaine distributor named Earl "Mustafa" Stewart was one of the JBM's main suppliers, and his name would later come up in a larger investigation. The ultra-violent JBM was known for its motto, "Get down or lay down" - cooperate or be killed. It followed through on that pledge all too often, to its ultimate demise.

The JBM actually had little in common with its more significant forefather. Where the Black Mafia was engaged in multiple rackets, scams and illicit enterprises, the JBM dealt exclusively in narcotics. Furthermore, the successors had nowhere near the same connections with legitimate society as several Black Mafia figures. The few ties between the new group and the original crew were sporadic and fleeting, not at all the lineage and mentoring suggested by the choice of the name Junior Black Mafia.

One oft-cited JBM tie to the Black Mafia involves Michael Youngblood. "Blood," as he was known, was arrested for his involvement in the Mims-Dawson prison drug network on 29 September 1983, and agreed that day to become an FBI informant. He pleaded guilty in 1984 to conspiracy to distribute cocaine, Quaaludes and marijuana, was given a suspended sentence in January 1988, and was placed on federal probation. Youngblood, a grand hustler in the mold of Major Coxson but without the entourage, played the informant system, snitching on various criminal enterprises while keeping his hand in illicit deals. In order to increase his street status, and to ingratiate himself with criminals he was seeking to incriminate, Youngblood put word out that he was one of the founders of the Junior Black Mafia, along with Nudie Mims and others. The Youngblood-JBM myth was quickly adopted by the Pennsylvania Crime Commission, which published the revelation in its reports, and by the Philadelphia press.

It wasn't true. According to his former FBI handlers, Michael Youngblood was never in the JBM, let alone one of its founders or leaders. Rather, they contend, the legend was just one of the many Youngblood-inspired cons that continue to impress. Youngblood finally caused authorities enough grief to cut him loose in March 1988, when he appeared in a TV documentary, unnamed and with his face obscured, claiming to be one of the city's top four drug dealers. During the broadcast, Youngblood also threatened to kill rival Jamaican drug dealers: "We're going to start exterminating them ... I'm telling them, we're coming. Not maybe, might, or we're thinking about it. We're coming. Just think when, where, or how. Who's going to be first?" Police and federal authorities immediately suspected it was Youngblood, and arrested him days after the broadcast with eighty-six vials of crack. In September 1988, Youngblood admitted violating his probation by making the threats and holding drugs, and was

sentenced to ten years in prison. Nevertheless, he would soon surface again in the broader Black Mafia story.

*

As Black Mafia links to the JBM and others emerged from time to time, another series of historical ties revealed themselves in the mid- to late-1980s. Philadelphia's volatile and mob-ridden Roofer's Union Local 30 had persisted despite the December 1980 assassination of its tough and flamboyant leader, John McCullough. Now led by Steve Traitz, the union was still under investigation for a variety of activities, including bribing judges. Traitz and other Local 30 officials were ultimately convicted on an assortment of charges, including racketeering offenses stemming from all sorts of tactics (beatings, arson, theft, terroristic threats) used to coerce and intimidate non-union contractors. Before sentencing, Traitz visited Shamsud-din Ali's Masjid to arrange protection for himself and his "colleagues" who were destined for Graterford and other Pennsylvania prisons. Ali was well known for his influence in the prison system, due in large part to his close relationship with Nudie Mims. The amorphous network didn't end there, however. Another Local 30 associate, John Berkery, had ties to several Black Mafia-related figures that went back decades. By the 1980s, Berkery was working with Raymond Martorano in the drug trade. Furthermore, Ray Martorano worked with his son, George, orchestrating narcotics deals with imprisoned leaders Lonnie Dawson and Nudie Mims.

Federal authorities documented the Traitz visit to the Masjid because they were already interested in Ali's multifarious activities. One FBI finding concerned manipulation of the state's work release programs for prisoners. For a prisoner to qualify for early release from prison, he had to put together a "home plan" that showed he had a relatively stable environment to which he could return. First and foremost, the offender had to establish that he had a job lined up, or at least a realistic strategy for obtaining one. The FBI learned through informants that Black Muslims, particularly Nudie Mims, had put a system in place whereby the Masjid would sponsor Mims's followers for parole, and Shamsud-din Ali would arrange for jobs – real or, so the allegations went, fictitious – in return for favors. Ali's close relationship with Sam Staten, the head of Local 332 of the Laborer's Union, was at the heart of the arrangement. Federal investigators from the FBI and the Department of Labor concluded at the time (in the mid- to late-1980s) that, as union members alleged, Staten was using Black Muslim ex-convicts to intimidate dissident union members. A federal grand jury looked into Staten's links to "criminal elements of the Black Muslims," but no charges were lodged against him.

Staten was also the focus of another organized crime probe. Back in 1985, Ralph Costabile, a South Philadelphia builder with connections to

GET DOWN OR LAY DOWN / 231

the Scarfo crime family, paid off a Scarfo associate so that Costobile could use non-Local 332 laborers on his construction sites. "Big Ralph" Costobile turned to mobster Nicholas Caramandi, who used his contacts to get in touch with boss Nicky Scarfo, who approved the scheme and directed an associate named Saul Kane to contact Roofers Local 30 boss Steve Traitz. Traitz, the mob's "labor guy," was enlisted as the go-between with Sam Staten at Local 332, since Costobile's scheme depended on Staten's approval. According to Caramandi, Staten met with the interested parties at Costobile's bar, Big Ralph's Saloon, on East Passyunk Avenue in South Philadelphia. All parties worked out a deal that resulted in non-union laborers working Costobile's site. Costobile told Caramandi that the meeting ended with Staten agreeing to the terms, and Costobile in possession of bogus union cards for his workers. Obviously, Scarfo got a cut of the ongoing deal, and Costobile's payments typically went through Caramandi and were conveniently delivered on Friday nights at Big Ralph's Saloon, a mob hangout. According to the Special Agent in Charge of the Labor Department's Philadelphia Office at the time, "Union members who complained about Costobile using non-union laborers were beaten and also in an election in 1985, Costobile on behalf of Sam Staten, made a payoff to an individual by the name of Eddie Walton. Walton was an individual who was a candidate for business manager who was going to run against Staten. And Costobile made a payoff to him in return for Walton withdrawing his candidacy and not opposing Sam Staten."

In fact, investigators documented that Walton was told "if he did not take the money and drop out of the race [against Staten] he would be killed." "Fast Eddie" Walton no doubt knew about 332's history of violence, which included the fatal beating of a dissident union member, and accepted the payoff. Insiders who followed the Ali-Staten-Costobile-Scarfo-Traitz activities no doubt recalled the Altemose and Skyway examples that exhibited the ties binding figures from Roofers Union Local 30, Laborer's Local Union 332, the defense team consisting of Cecil Moore, Charles Peruto, Robert Simone, Stanley Branche and Gus Lacy, and racketeers like Frank Sheeran, John Berkery, Major Coxson, Junior Staino and Sonny Viner.

Though Ralph Costabile eventually pleaded guilty to his involvement in the racketeering activities, Local 332 leader Sam Staten was never charged. Staten's lawyer at the time was Ronald A. White, and the two would be under federal scrutiny again ten years later. Meanwhile, yet another old school Black Mafia figure turned up in the Staten-Costobile probe. It was discovered that in late 1984, Stanley Branche acted as a broker between Costobile and a drug dealer over a \$20,000 debt the dealer owed Costobile for two pounds of methamphetamine. Branche's mention in the Costobile investigations was not remarkable, considering his involvement with this crowd over many years. The FBI took note of these events as part of a larger case they were building against Philadelphia's Italian-American crime family.

Stanley Branche and his dear friend Gus Lacy had survived a few brushes with the law over the years. In addition to the Advance Security-Renewal Authority scandal in the early 1970s, the two were charged in 1977 with bilking a medical school student of \$5,000 in return for getting the student into Philadelphia's Hahnemann Medical College. The charges were ultimately dropped when a prosecution witness died. Branche, of course, lived an interesting life, doing edgework between the underworld and the upperworld. Among numerous other pursuits, the former activist had owned three nightspots through the years: the Rolls Royce (with Major Coxson), the Graduate (with Gus Lacy) and Bugsy Siegel's. Siegel's, named after the infamous Prohibition-era gangster, lasted less than two months.

Branche's affinity for the gangster life eventually led to his arrest for extorting drug dealers on behalf of the Scarfo family. Comically, Branche was running for Congress, with Lacy as his campaign treasurer, at the time. The key incident in the case occurred in August 1985, when Branche and Norman Lit demanded a street tax of \$1,000 per week in tribute to the "downtown mob" from a Northeast Philadelphia drug dealer. The incident took place in a Dunkin' Donuts parking lot on Street Road in the Northeast, and the jury rejected the testimony of Branche's key defense witness, his pal Gus Lacy, who claimed he and Branche remained inside the store throughout the incident. One piece of evidence in the case was an FBI tape recording of a November 1986 conversation between Branche and George Botsaris, a leader of Philadelphia's "Greek mob." The tape illustrated the breadth and depth of Branche's knowledge of the underworld.

High-profile defense attorney Robert Simone, perhaps known best for his defense of mob boss Nicodemo Scarfo and other Italian-American crime figures, represented Branche. Simone had been tight with Branche and Lacy for years, and his clientele had included fringe Black Mafia players like James "Foo-Foo" Ragan, Raymond Martorano, and George Martorano. Despite the efforts of Simone, who considered Branche a "dear friend and drinking buddy," the former NAACP leader was convicted in March 1989 and sentenced to five years in federal prison. Reverend Jesse Jackson was among those who wrote letters of support for Branche's parole. Ironically, Branche's pal and defense attorney, Simone, was later convicted of racketeering, extortion and using the violent reputation of the mob to collect loan-shark debts, and was sentenced to a four-year prison term.

*

?

On 25 October 1989, Philadelphia police and FBI agents entered a home on Watkins Street and found Joseph "Jo Jo" Rhone asleep on a sofa. Before Rhone could reach a .38 caliber handgun lying on the floor nearby, authorities arrested him, ending his thirteen-year run as a fugitive from the Herschell Williams murder in 1975. Along the way, he had hidden in

GET DOWN OR LAY DOWN / 233

various mosques in Atlanta, Chicago and Detroit. He was charged with the April 1976 murder of James "Monk" Hadley, but the key witness against him, Lonnie Diggs, refused to testify; in 1976, when Diggs had originally named Rhone as the shooter, his mother's home was firebombed and his sister was shot. Federal authorities believed Rhone had stayed in contact with local drug dealers, especially Lonnie Dawson, William Roy Hoskins and Gene Hearn, and may have been one of their sources. He was eventually convicted of both the Williams and Hadley murders.

Meanwhile, *the* most prominent Black Mafia throwback was making an inauspicious return to the streets. Sam Christian was paroled on 4 November 1988, at the age of fifty. He tried to gain the favor of the Junior Black Mafia on numerous occasions, starting just after his release from prison. According to law enforcement sources, Christian was trying to negotiate a truce between the ever-warring factions. "Sam's back and wants to teach these kids some self-discipline," said one investigator. He was rebuffed by the young members for unknown reasons, although one law enforcement official said that he "didn't have the network, fidelity, contacts, supply or distribution" necessary to make his leadership count. One also has to wonder if the JBM crowd knew what little credibility the seminal Black Mafia had in matters of "self-discipline." Christian was arrested in July of 1990 for possession of crack cocaine, in violation of his parole, and was off the streets again.

The JBM soon followed. Law enforcement started receiving good intelligence on the gang not long after it was founded in the mid-1980s, and the Federal Strike Force was assigned to investigate the JBM in 1989. Investigators discovered the group put 100-200 kilos of cocaine, especially in the form of crack, on the streets each month. The JBM murdered several dozen people, including rivals, witnesses, innocent bystanders and their own confederates. Most of the gang's members who survived its many internecine battles were arrested in 1990 and 1991, and the remaining infrastructure was decimated in March of 1992, when twenty-six defendants went on trial for operating "a continuing criminal enterprise known as the JBM." The flash-in-the-pan quasi-successor group with a predilection for media attention and murder was vanquished for good.

★

During his twenty-one years in Graterford, Nudie Mims had corrupted the system through payoffs to guards in cash, narcotics, and sexual favors carried out in his Black Muslim "office" by prostitutes posing as religious volunteers. Women visitors would often wear religious garb to conceal the day's contraband on the odd occasion a guard was not compromised. Yet Mims also provided a service to the prison through his influence on other inmates. "Nudie keeps the lid on things and everything is under his control,"